



LIBRARIES

Room by Room

Dedication of the third piece of Messinger family's project completes an effort to restore historic spaces for students.

By Kathleen McGarvey

THE VIEWS OF EASTMAN QUAD FROM RUSH Rhees Library's second floor haven't changed, but the rooms inside certainly have.

The second of two new graduate studies was officially opened in May at a special ceremony honoring trustee Martin Messinger '49 and his family, who donated the funds for the studies' creation. The rooms

flank the Martin E. Messinger '49 Periodical Reading Room, which was dramatically renovated in the late 1990s. Together, the three rooms form a renovated and restored west front on the second floor of the library.

"If you look at how the library is running, with students there around the clock, you see that it's pivotal, and necessary," Messinger says of his belief in the centrality of libraries. "You have to give students the infrastructure they need to do their work.

Other than feeding them, I can't think of anything more important."

He recalls working in the Periodical Reading Room when he was a student. "It was a great, open room," he says, but fluorescent ceiling lights added in the 1960s created "lousy lighting."

In time for Rochester's sesquicentennial in 2000, the room was reopened, complete with pendant lights resembling the original 1930s fixtures and an ambience that has made it one of the library's most popular spaces.

With this spring's dedication of Messinger Graduate Study Room South and its companion, Messinger Graduate Study Room North, Rochester students have a suite of comfortable and historic spaces in which to study. The two graduate student rooms had



COMPLETE PICTURE: One of Rush Rhees Library's most popular spaces, the Martin E. Messinger '49 Periodical Reading Room (A) anchors the renovated west side of the second floor, including two new spaces designed for graduate students—Messinger Graduate Study Room North (C) and Messinger Graduate Study Room South (B).



been used as storage spaces until a remark from Susan Gibbons, vice provost and Andrew H. and Janet Dayton Neilly Dean of River Campus Libraries, about wanting to enhance the library's facilities for graduate students inspired Messinger.

"The Messinger Graduate Study Rooms ensure that our graduate students have a convenient, comfortable, and contemplative space on campus where they can focus on their own research in the company of fellow graduate students who are on similar academic journeys," Gibbons says.

Messinger takes satisfaction in the final results. "We live in an era of information without knowledge," he says, and libraries are a corrective to that.

"That was one of my reasons for supporting these projects." **B**

Take a Tour

To see more views of the Messinger rooms at Rush Rhees Library, including 360-degree panoramic views of the three rooms along with before and after photos, and to learn more about the Messinger family, visit *Review's* Web site at www.rochester.edu/pr/Review.

